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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

June 11, 2019

Mr. Bob Baxter, Chief Executive Officer
St. Vincent Medical Center, Mercy Health – Toledo
2213 Cherry Street
Toledo, Ohio 43608

Mr. Rich Rankin, Director
United Auto Workers Region 2-B
1691 Woodlands Drive
Maumee, OH 43537

President Baxter and Director Rankin:

Congratulations on coming to an agreement to bring technical workers and support staff back to work at St. Vincent Medical Center in Toledo. I am encouraged by this success, and I urge both parties to maximize the momentum created by this agreement to come back to the table to negotiate in good faith an agreement with the nurses unit as well. Doing so will ensure St. Vincent Medical Center remains able to provide excellent, safe care to its patients and the larger community.

The ratified contract between the hospital and technical and support staff demonstrates the value of continued, good faith negotiations. I am confident that the same sort of compromise can be struck as you continue to discuss a path forward for the nurses unit. When I visited the picket line at St. Vincent Medical Center last month, the stories I heard from nurses made clear that they seek to do their work with dignity. Likewise, my conversations with hospital leadership made clear that both the employees and hospital system share the same priority: protecting patient safety and ensuring the highest quality of care. It is important to remember that we all share the same goals.

I am concerned that the significant signing bonuses being offered to new hires sends a message to striking nurses that they can simply be replaced. If the goal of the bonuses is to demonstrate that Mercy Health is committed to increasing nursing staff at St. Vincent Medical Center to improve nurse:patient ratios, that should be brought to the negotiations.

I encourage both parties to continue working hard to find a resolution that allows the nursing staff and Mercy Health to fulfill their mission of providing the best possible health care to those in need. Please do not hesitate to reach out if there is an appropriate way that my office can be helpful as you move forward.

Respectfully,



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator